

# Professionals And Executives Support A Relationship Between Organizational Commitment And Spirituality In The Workplace

Eleanor Marschke, Nova Southeastern University, USA  
Robert Preziosi, Nova Southeastern University, USA  
William Harrington, Nova Southeastern University, USA

## ABSTRACT

*This research was aimed at the study of organizational commitment to the relationship of spirituality in the workplace. In addition, organizational commitment and spirituality in the workplace was analyzed as stand alone variables. The design of this study was to interpret, develop, test and present research that explains the connection between workplace spirituality and a person's perception to the relationship of organizational commitment. The ultimate goal of this research was to examine the relationships of the variables that would lead to further growth in employee development, increased job performance, lower turnover rates, higher profits and employee retention as they relate to organizational goals and strategies. **his research indicated that there is a widespread belief that for companies to survive into the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the face of economical downturn and global competition, it is necessary for leaders and employees to tap into their spiritual resources.** All the collected evidence from this research points to a strong and significant relationship between the variables. **The potentially groundbreaking nature of this research leaves no doubt that the intuitively positive relationship between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment may transform individual and organizational lives in ways unrestricted by natural law.***

**Keywords:** Leadership, Organizational Commitment, Spirituality

## SPIRITUALITY AND THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE

*A*n evolving American culture and an unreliable business climate are driving the revitalization of the workplace through an infusion of spirituality. The need for a spiritual connection has become important to a wider audience, partly because of an ongoing upheaval in organizational structure, which often results in feelings of insecurity regarding one's place in the system (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Corporate character is being called into question, not only with financial issues such as stock management and corporations ignoring generally accepted accounting procedures, but also with regard to human resource issues and business ethics, environmental policies, human rights, corporate contributions, community development and workplace success. Workplace spirituality has risen to the forefront since the late 1990's, partly due to the enormous cost of disregarding human resource standards as they relate to business practices. The sagas of Enron in 2000 and MCI in 2001 are just two examples where lack of character, arrogance, and immoral values among top management inflicted widespread emotional, organizational, and financial devastation to employees, customers and stockholders, as well as penalties and imprisonment for their morally bankrupt leadership (Aburdene, 2007).

Spirituality in the workplace is about people who perceive themselves as spirited beings, whose spirits desire and need to be energized through work. It is about experiencing real purpose and meaning at work beyond paychecks and performance reviews. Spirituality is about people sharing and experiencing some common

attachment, attraction, and togetherness with each other within their work unit and the organization as a whole (Harrington, 2004). It is a continuing search for meaning and purpose in life; an appreciation for the depth of life, the expanse of the universe, and natural forces which operate it; and, it is a personal belief system (Myers, 1990).

The recent spurt of scholarly articles along with several authors currently writing on the work-spirituality connection (Benefiel, 2003; Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Dehler & Welsh, 1994) reflects the interest in the relationship of spirituality in the workplace, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Connolly & Myers, 2003; Milliman, Czaplewski & Ferguson, 2003). The need for a spiritual connection has become important to a wider audience, partly because of ongoing changes in organizational structure, which often results in feelings of insecurity regarding one's place in the system (Heaton, Schmidt-Wilk & Travis, 2004).

The core of spirituality is about people sharing and experiencing some common attachment, attraction, and togetherness within their work unit and the organization as a whole. (Harrington, 2004; Mitroff & Denton, 1999). These research areas imply the necessity of incorporating spirituality into the workplace in order to enhance worker motivation, organizational performance, and job satisfaction (Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002). Based on prior research it appears that working in an environment with leaders that support a higher purpose or spiritual sense of the individual than those who don't are more satisfied and enjoy work more (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz 2003).

The term spirituality means different things to different people. Webster's Dictionary defines spirituality as: of, relating to, consisting of or affecting the spirit; of relating to sacred matters; concerned with religious values; of, related to, or joint in spirit. The term spirituality comes from the Latin word *spiritus*, meaning vapor, breath, air or wind. Mitroff & Denton (1999) defined spirituality as the desire to find one's ultimate purpose in life, and to live accordingly. However, a review of the literature determined that there is no single agreed-upon definition of the term "spirituality" among those who are conducting research in this field.

The varying perceptions and definitions of spirituality in the workplace make this phenomenon as interesting as it is. Freshman's (1999) qualitative research, "An Exploratory Analysis of Definitions and Applications of Spirituality in the Workplace," used grounded theory to develop definitions based on specific applications of spirituality in the workplace, and is important in defining this phenomenon. Freshman found:

1. "Not any one, two or even three things can be said about spirituality in the workplace that would include the universe of explanations."
2. "There is no one answer to the question, 'What is spirituality in the workplace?'"
3. "Definitions and applications of spirituality in the workplace are unique to individuals. Therefore when planning any group or organizational intervention around the topic, again the suggestion is made to derive definitions and goals from the participants themselves."
4. "There are many possible ways to understand such a complex and diverse area as spirituality in the workplace."

## **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

There is currently limited knowledge and research about the relationship between workplace spirituality, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Hence, this empirical study assesses the strength of the relationship between spirituality in the workplace, and organizational commitment. Moore and Casper (2006) measured the impact of a proxy of workplace spirituality (perceived organizational support) and found a high correlation between affective organizational commitment and intrinsic job satisfaction

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study addresses the following two key questions:

1. Is spirituality in the workplace related to organizational commitment?

2. Are there variables that moderate the relationship between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment

Organizational commitment is an important variable that has been established as relating to individuals and organizational performance. The independent variable in this study is organizational commitment and the dependent variable is spirituality in the workplace.

**Figure 1: Model of the relationship between Spirituality in the Workplace, Organizational Commitment**



### **LIMITATIONS & DELIMITATIONS**

The limitations hampering a scientific study of workplace spirituality are threefold: (1) less than adequate measurement tools; (2) limited theoretical development; and (3) legal concerns.

This study will be delimited in that it will recognize that every human being is a spiritual being; however, not every human being is a religious person. Religion, while it may be the vehicle through which some individuals express their spiritual desires, will not be the focus of this dissertation. It will, however, be addressed in some aspects simply because the research that has been reviewed in the health care industry has been associated with religious terms (Reed, 1991). In addition, this study, while recognizing the spirituality of the individual, is more concerned with the value of corporate-initiated and sponsored programs to encourage spiritual expression by its employees as they relates to organizational commitment. Since this study covers workplace spirituality, and not workplace religion, legal concerns should be minimal and these variables are embedded in the cognitive theories of psychology and have been used in organizational theories since the 1920's (Hill & Pargament, 2003).

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

This study is significant because there is still so much divergence, even controversy, in perceptions about the phenomenon of spirituality in the workplace. There is a significant degree of inhibition among corporate professionals in the 21st century to implement the research that has been completed on embracing spirituality as it relates to an employee's commitment to the organization. This research will be an important contribution to research on these variables since almost no studies exist in this area of research and the ways it which it influences management, human resources and the corporate organization as a whole.

Perhaps one of the biggest fears that hinders the ability of corporations to adopt programs stimulating spirituality in the workplace is that of discrimination lawsuits. It would be nice to believe that human resource management seeks to put the good of the corporation first, and the employee second; however, each individual is most of all concerned with his or her own employment.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The definitions of selected terms used throughout this study are as follows:

**Organizational Commitment:** The extent to which an individual identifies with and is involved in a particular organization (Mowday et al., 1979).

**Spirituality in the workplace:** Workplace spirituality involves the effort to find one's ultimate purpose in life, to develop a strong connection to coworkers and other people associated with work, and to have consistency or alignment between one's core beliefs and values of their organization (Mitroff and Denton, 1999).

**Table 1: Definitions of spirituality<sup>1</sup>**

| Definitions of Spirituality                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Source                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| The personal expression of ultimate concern                                                                                                                                                                                   | Emmons (2000)                         |
| That which involves ultimate and personal truths                                                                                                                                                                              | Wong (1998), p. 364                   |
| How the individual lives meaningfully with ultimacy in his or her response to the deepest truths of the universe                                                                                                              | Bregman and Thierman (1995), p. 149   |
| Our response to a deep and mysterious human yearning for self-transcendence and surrender, a yearning to find our place                                                                                                       | Benner (1989), p. 20                  |
| A way of being and experiencing that comes about through awareness of a transcendent dimension and that is characterized by certain identifiable values in regard to self, life and whatever one considers to be the ultimate | Elkins et al. (1988), p. 10           |
| A transcendent dimension within human experience . . . discovered in moments in which the individual questions the meaning of personal existence and attempts to place the self within a broader ontological context          | Shafranske and Gorsuch (1984), p. 231 |
| A subjective experience of the sacred                                                                                                                                                                                         | Vaughn (1991), p. 105                 |
| A personal life principle which animates a transcendent quality of relationship with God                                                                                                                                      | Emblen (1992), p. 45                  |
| That vast realm of human potential dealing with ultimate purposes, with higher entities, with God, with life, with compassion, with purpose                                                                                   | Tart (1975), p. 4                     |
| That human striving for the transforming power present in life; it is that attraction and movement of the human person toward the divine                                                                                      | Dale (1991), p. 5                     |
| Pertaining to the innate capacity to, and tendency to seek to, transcend one's current focus of centrality, which with transcendence involves increased knowledge and love                                                    | Chandler and Holden (1992)            |
| The animating force that inspires one toward purposes that are beyond one's self and that give one's life meaning and direction                                                                                               | McKnight (1984), p. 142               |

## REVIEW OF THE CURRENT LITERATURE

A search in Proquest provided 147 journal articles and 23 doctoral dissertations on the subject of spirituality, including psychology journals containing information about spirituality as it relates to constructs, methods, and measures for researching spirituality in organizations. Two foundational books, *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America*, by Mitroff and Denton (1999), and *The Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*, by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003), are cited numerous times throughout this literature review. A 1999 issue of *U.S. News & World Report* revealed that in the preceding decade, more than 300 titles on workplace spirituality have been distributed in bookstores. Indeed, at least thirty MBA programs now offer courses on this subject. The literature review presents a definition and an integral model of spirituality in the workplace in the following sections:

- The Spirituality Movement of the 21st Century
- Spirituality's Impact on the Work Environment
- A Model: The Interaction of the Spiritual Being in the Work Environment
- Organizational Commitment

<sup>1</sup> Giacalone, R & Jurkiewicz, C (2003). *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*.

## **THE SPIRITUALITY MOVEMENT OF THE 21ST CENTURY**

Ashmos and Duchon (2000) recognize that the world of corporate work is changing. Where Americans work, how they work, particularly since the advent of computer technology allowing telecommuting, bringing about the isolation and impersonal sense of detachment of those who work and communicate solely through computers—all of these factors contribute to a workplace ripe for embracing a connection, whether it be through spirituality or some other source. Five reasons for corporate America's growing interest in spirituality at work are noted by: (Ashmos & Duchon, p.134)

1. "The downsizing, reengineering, and layoffs of the past decade have turned the American workplace into an environment where workers are often demoralized."
2. "The workplace is being seen more often as a primary source of community for many people because of the decline of neighborhoods, churches, civic groups, and extended families as principal places for feeling connected."
3. "Curiosity about Pacific Rim cultures and Eastern philosophies. Philosophies such as Zen Buddhism and Confucianism, which encourage meditation and stress values such as loyalty to one's groups and finding one's spiritual center in any activity, are finding acceptance."
4. "As aging baby boomers move closer to life's greatest uncertainty—death—there is a growing interest in contemplating life's meaning."
5. "The pressure of global competition has led organizational leaders to recognize that employee creativity needs a fuller expression at work."

The hunger for personal meaning in life is documented by the phenomenal success of two religious leaders' impact on the non-religious world (Osteen, 2004). The New York Times Bestseller list includes Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life — What on Earth Am I Here for?* and Joel Osteen's book, *Your Best Life Now — 7 Steps to Living at Your Full Potential*. *The Purpose-Driven Life* has transformed millions of lives around the world, and is a blueprint for living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, using the time-tested wisdom of the Bible. It is a book of both hope and challenge that is a classic in inspirational literature. Rick Warren is often called "America's most influential spiritual leader" and a "spiritual entrepreneur" (Warren, 2002). Kroll (2003) in his *Forbes Magazine* article, said, "If Warren's ministry was a business it would be compared with Dell, Google, or Starbucks in impact" (p. 2).

Indeed, the spiritual movement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is reflected in the very way government is conducted in the White House. In his book, *The Faith of George W. Bush*, Steven Mansfield discusses the spirituality of the chief office of the United States. Mansfield describes the Bush brand of management as one distinguished by White House employees encouraged to bring their faith to work with them. Since 1997, federal regulations have allowed religious activities in government workplaces so long as the nonreligious were not harassed or pressured. Bible studies and prayer meetings in federal buildings have become commonplace, and nowhere more than in the White House itself (Mansfield, 2003).

## **SPIRITUALITY'S IMPACT ON THE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

How does spirituality in the workplace relate to the bottom line of a business? Recent publications and studies have focused on the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational performance (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Earlier studies showed a strong correlation between corporate culture/core values and profitability. A Harvard Business School study examined ten companies with strong corporate culture and ten with weak corporate culture, drawn from a list of 200 leading companies. Researchers in this study not only found a dramatic correlation between an organization's spiritual culture and its profitability; but, also found that, in some cases, the more spiritual companies outperformed the others by 400 to 500 percent in terms of net earnings, return on investment, and shareholder value (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003).

Research performed by University of Southern California's Marshall Graduate School of Business Professor Ian Mitroff (Mitroff, 1999) indicates that organizations which identify themselves as spiritual have employees who: 1) are less fearful of their organizations; 2) are less likely to compromise their basic beliefs and values in the workplace; 3) perceive their organizations as being significantly more profitable; and, 4) report that they can bring significantly more of their complete selves to work, especially their creativity and intelligence.

Companies that excel at engaging the hearts and minds of their people not only have values, they live them, thereby providing an element of spirituality in the everyday working environment. Companies that focus on processes that include the spiritual element, such as bringing together employees for motivation at work and encouraging employees to find meaning in work, often increase employee retention, which has a decided impact on profitability.

McLaughlin (1998) emphasizes the relationship between spirituality and profitability by asserting, “A growing movement across the country is promoting spiritual values in the workplace and pointing to many examples of increased productivity and profitability” (p. 11). According to McLaughlin, organizations that want to survive in the twenty first century will have to offer a greater sense of meaning and purpose—key elements of spirituality, to their workforce. The author stresses, “In today’s highly competitive environment, the best talent seeks out organizations that reflect their inner values and provide opportunities for personal development and community service, not just bigger salaries” (p. 11).

A credible way of demonstrating the correlation between a spiritual approach and corporate profitability is through case studies of companies. For that purpose, Milliman, Ferguson, Tricket and Condemni (1999) selected Southwest Airlines, justifying their choice for this company as follows:

We selected Southwest Airlines (SWA) for our case study because it appears to have a strong sense of spiritual-based values guiding its organizational goals and practices. In addition, the company has an established track record of excellent organizational performance as well as high employee and customer satisfaction. In profiling SWA we certainly do not want to imply that it is a perfect example of living spiritual values; it has its problems and limitations like other firms. Despite this, there seems to be a genuine sense of spirit and affection in both SWA employees and customers (p. 221).

The purpose of the article was to examine the ways spirituality is manifested within SWA and assess the impact of spirituality on SWA employees, customers, and organizational performance. Included in this case study was the result that because of high employee satisfaction, SWA employees have one of the lowest turnover rates (six percent, at the time of the study) in the airline industry.

Another case of profitability in a spiritually-led company is the Herman Miller Furniture Company. Max DePree, CEO of the Herman Miller Furniture Company is recognized among successful business leaders who demonstrate a personal spirituality that inspires good moral habits. In his book, *Business as Unusual: the People and Principles at Herman Miller* (1992), DePree describes the company as problem-solving, risk-taking, committed to change, dedicated to quality and the pursuit of excellence. It fosters an open climate of freedom in which people have the right and responsibility to contribute, to be involved, and to influence the design and manufacture of office and health care furniture. One of the ways to measure Herman Miller’s successful performance is through the frequency in which this company is mentioned by a wide variety of authors on the topic of management excellence and outstanding organizational behavior.

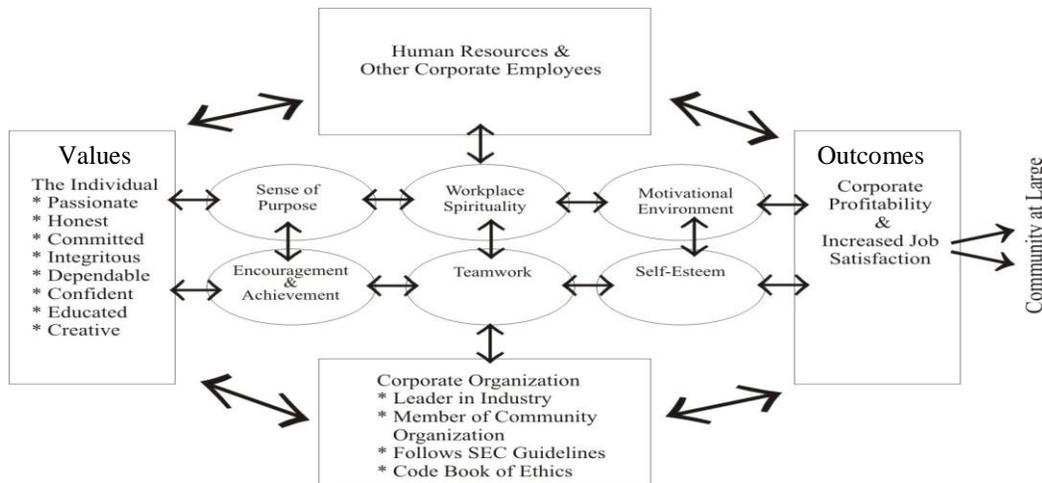
**THE INTERACTION OF THE SPIRITUAL BEING IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Marques and Dhiman (2005) studied spirituality in the workplace by interviewing six business executives in a qualitative study and developed a list of vital themes for spirituality in the workplace. The 19 themes are:

**Themes that Apply to a Spiritual Workplace**

|                                 |                                  |                        |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Ethics                          | Trust                            | Acceptance             |
| Truth                           | Kindness (bonding, compassion)   | Encouraging creativity |
| Belief in God or a higher power | Team orientation                 | Encouraging diversity  |
| Respect                         | Few organizational barriers      | Being self motivated   |
| Understanding                   | A sense of peace and harmony     | Interconnectedness     |
| Openness                        | Aesthetically pleasing workplace | Honesty                |

These themes are all components a human being brings to the workplace and, when given the proper nurturing environment by management, allowing these traits to flourish has a positive impact on the profitability of a successful corporation. These factors into a model to display the process of the interaction of the spiritual person with the corporate body as depicted below:



<sup>1</sup> Marques, J, and Dhiman, S. (2005). Spirituality in the Workplace: Developing an Integral Model and a Comprehensive Definition. *Journal of American Academy of Business*. p.88.

**DISCUSSION OF THE MODEL**

This figure is a representation of the spiritual values a person holds as they interact with the corporate body, with the desired outcome that these spiritual values are a positive catalyst for the corporation to achieve leadership status in profitability, ethics, world citizenship, and philanthropy:

1. The model encompasses the values, the human resources function, the corporate outcomes and the corporate organization.
2. The human resource function, by nurturing applications of spirituality in the workplace, fosters a motivational environment supported by encouragement and recognition of achievement.
3. The individual’s spiritual values lead him or her to be passionate, honest, committed, dependable, confident, educated and creative. This, in turn, creates a dedicated, purpose-directed, member of the corporate organization, who possesses high self-esteem.
4. When workers are purpose-driven and dedicated, and when the human resource function recognizes achievement, working as a team to attain common goals will be productive and satisfying.
5. A corporate body composed of passionate, honest, dedicated, self-directed, achievement-oriented individuals with high job satisfaction will be accountable to its overseers, both corporate and governmental, and will attain increased profitability and productivity. It will use its resources, including its employees, to promote good citizenship to the larger community.
6. This organization will, in turn, continue to place value on nurturing spirituality among its workforce.

**ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT**

The extent to which any individual identifies with and is involved in a particular company or organization. (Mowday, et al., 1979) An organization must become sensitive to its workers’ personal lives and beliefs in order to increase job productivity and reduce turn-over rates. A company must first understand what it means for an employee to express him or herself spiritually and it involves the assumptions that each person has his or her own inner motivations and truths and desires to be involved in activities that give greater meaning to his or her life and the lives of others (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). Mowday, et al., (1979) termed the efforts a company makes to

involve itself within the personal lives of its employees as perceived organizational support – an employee understanding that the company cares about their beliefs and values their input and efforts. When the employee understands that the company not only sees them as another worker, but also as a valued individual with unique ideas and a sense of spirituality, the employee's work is enhanced because he or she then puts in his or her "whole" self while on the job. This atmosphere stimulates satisfaction, rather than dissatisfaction. Trust and commitment towards the organization are key components of overall job satisfaction.

According to Rego (2007) this research provided an understanding of the relationship between spirituality and organizations, this empirical and theoretical evidence presented the perceptions of employees about workplace spirituality and their level of organizational commitment. The research indicated that commitment is a central variable, given that more committed people tend to devote higher efforts to work, thus contributing to organizational performance. Perception by the employee is the key. Conversely, it has been found that employees who perceive that the organization they are working for does not support the individual's creative and spiritual needs do not put forth their best efforts, decreasing job efficiencies and creating a negative and destructive atmosphere. In order for companies to begin altering and/or changing their employees' perception, they must first begin to recognize that between their employees are a multitude of spiritual "holes" that need to be fed by either practices "such as meditation, self-reflection, and prayer" (Bell and Taylor, 2001).

In order for an employee's and a corporation's values to be aligned, an employee must share the concept that he or she is a part of a "higher" organization, one that strives to be a corporation with high sensibility, scruples, and an awareness and adherence to ethics and integrity; an organization with the purpose to contribute to something greater than itself. According to Marques, (2007) an organization that nurtures diversity, flexibility, creativity, and a free flow of communicating, will find its operations improving, and may even grow to become a trendsetter in its industry. When this alignment takes place, a sense of community within the workplace is developed and employees enjoy this sense of community, thus increasing satisfaction. Benefits arise when employees realize that they are now a part of a community.

## **METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

This section will define the research design and methodology for this study. More specifically, it describes the research question and hypothesis, the targeted population and the sample taken from the population, the survey instruments, and research variables. The targeted population of this study is non traditional students and professional executive working managers. The sample for this population is taken from full-time non traditional students who attend a business school in the southeast, and working professionals at the managerial level.

One hundred and sixty three surveys were administered in person and returned directly to the researchers during several capstone classes with a return rate of 100 percent and a 95 percent usability. Key demographic variables including gender and age were reviewed to further characterize the sample.

This study used the Spiritual Perspective Scale ("SPS") developed by Reed (1987). The response scale is a 6 point Likert scale with selections ranging from strongly disagree, to not at all, to strongly agree. All previous studies showed Cronbach alpha reliability estimates of  $> .70$  (Jesse and Reed, 2003, Jesse and Allgood, 2002, Steven 1999, Reed 1991). This study yielded a Cronbach alpha of .921.

To measure the employee's commitment to the organization, a short version of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire ("OCQ") developed by Porter and Smith (1970) was used. The shortened scale was developed by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982, see also Cook, et al., 1981). These fifteen items on the OCQ are designed to assess respondent's loyalty and desire to remain with the organization, their belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization, and their willingness to put in extra effort to help an organization be successful (Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995). The instrument is composed of 15 items with responses scored 1 to 7 (1= strongly disagree, 7 =strongly agree). Cronbach alpha coefficients of the Mowday et al. scale have also consistently yielded reliabilities  $> .70$  (Kerr & Jermier 1978, Jermier & Berkes 1979, Ivancevich 1979, O'Reilly and Roberts 1978, Mowday, Steers and Porter 1979). The current study yielded a Cronbach alpha of .947.

## DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The student surveys were self administered and collected and coded with the date of collection at the period of time they are received. The researcher administered the surveys to the respondents in person with specific instructions regarding the survey completion. The total time to complete the survey was 30 minutes. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS. A missing value analysis showed low levels of missing values at the item level. It can, therefore, be assumed that missing values at the item level have no impact on the recorded results.

## RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

Currently there is limited knowledge about the relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational commitment. This study is designed to determine the strength of the relationship between spirituality in the workplace, and organizational commitment and the impact of moderating variables such as gender or age. In order to assess the moderating effect the moderating variable was multiplied with the spirituality scale and the spirituality scale in addition with the newly created variable were regressed on the organizational commitment scale. The moderating effect is then tested by the significance of the interaction effect of the moderating and the independent variable on the dependent variable organizational commitment, in a hierarchical way via a moderating multiple regression procedure (MMR). This procedure is in line with recommendations made by Baron and Kenny (1986) to investigate the impact of moderating variables on a dependent and an independent variable.

This study addresses the following two key questions:

1. Is spirituality in the workplace related to organizational commitment?
2. Are there variables that moderate the relationship between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment?

The specific hypotheses are as follows:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment.  
**H<sub>A1</sub>:** There is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by gender.  
**H<sub>A2</sub>:** There is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by gender.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by age.  
**H<sub>A3</sub>:** There is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by age.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

The data analysis was conducted following a step-by-step approach as follows:

In a first step, descriptive statistics of the individual items of each survey instrument will be reviewed in order to calculate the average, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of the variables. Outliers will also be reviewed and if necessary discarded from the analysis. This step is important as a precursor to the validity and reliability study of this research. The key first step will be the calculation of the correlation matrix for each of the two scales. It should be noted that departures from normality, homoscedacity and linearity only reduce the correlation between the items (Hair et, al. 1998, p. 99). Based on the analysis, no remedial countermeasures were necessary.

## ANALYSIS OF HYPOTHESIS

1. *Spirituality and Organizational Commitment*

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment.  
**H<sub>A1</sub>:** There is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment.

The beta coefficient of the simple regression of spirituality on organizational commitment is not significant (beta = -.111, t = -1.336, p = 0.184). Given that sig. (0.184) is greater than alpha (.05), the NULL cannot be rejected therefore there is no support of the HYPO that here is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1     | .111 <sup>a</sup> | .012     | .005              | 11.5982                    | 1.951         |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Spirituality
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 239.998        | 1   | 239.998     | 1.784 | .184 <sup>a</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 19101.495      | 142 | 134.518     |       |                   |
|       | Total      | 19341.493      | 143 |             |       |                   |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Spirituality
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model |              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients <sup>1</sup> | t      | Sig. |
|-------|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------|--------|------|
|       |              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                                   |        |      |
| 1     | (Constant)   | 45.142                      | 4.887      |                                        | 9.237  | .000 |
|       | Spirituality | -.128                       | .096       | -.111                                  | -1.336 | .184 |

- a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

2. *Spirituality and Organizational Commitment by gender*

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by gender.

**H<sub>A2</sub>:** There is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by gender.

The beta coefficient of the interaction term between spirituality and gender, and organizational commitment is not significant (beta = -.013, t = -.145, p = 0.885). Given that the sig. (0.885) is greater than the alpha (0.05), the NULL cannot be rejected therefore there is no support for the HYPO that there is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by gender.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1     | .112 <sup>a</sup> | .013     | -.001             | 11.6384                    | 1.955         |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Spirit by gender, Spirituality
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F    | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 242.831        | 2   | 121.416     | .896 | .410 <sup>a</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 19098.662      | 141 | 135.452     |      |                   |
|       | Total      | 19341.493      | 143 |             |      |                   |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Spirit by gender, Spirituality
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

| Model |                  | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|-------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|       |                  | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| 1     | (Constant)       | 45.261                      | 4.973      |                           | 9.102  | .000 |
|       | Spirituality     | -.122                       | .103       | -.107                     | -1.181 | .240 |
|       | Spirit by gender | -5.86E-03                   | .041       | -.013                     | -.145  | .885 |

- a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

3. Spirituality and Organizational Commitment by age

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by age.

**H<sub>A3</sub>:** There is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by age.

The beta coefficient of the interaction term between spirituality and age, and organizational commitment is not significant (beta = -.045, t = -.467, p = 0.642). Given that the sig. (0.642) is greater than alpha (0.05) the NULL cannot be rejected therefore there is no support for the HYPO that there is a correlation between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment by age.

Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1     | .128 <sup>a</sup> | .016     | .002              | 11.6704                    | 1.934         |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Spirituality by age, Spirituality
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 309.592        | 2   | 154.796     | 1.137 | .324 <sup>a</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 18522.955      | 136 | 136.198     |       |                   |
|       | Total      | 18832.547      | 138 |             |       |                   |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Spirituality by age, Spirituality
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

**Coefficients <sup>a</sup>**

| Model |                     | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|-------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|       |                     | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| 1     | (Constant)          | 45.505                      | 5.005      |                           | 9.092  | .000 |
|       | Spirituality        | -.115                       | .111       | -.100                     | -1.039 | .301 |
|       | Spirituality by age | -7.53E-03                   | .016       | -.045                     | -.467  | .642 |

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

**Summary of Hypothesis tests**

| Hypothesis | Variables                                                      | Results               |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| H1         | Spirituality in the workplace Organizational Commitment        | Fail to Reject (null) |
| H2         | Spirituality in the workplace Organizational Commitment Gender | Fail to Reject (null) |
| H3         | Spirituality in the workplace Organizational Commitment Age    | Fail to Reject (null) |

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, corporate organizations must seek to develop options that will result in a competitive advantage. Developing a spiritual vision can bind an employee to the company and enhance job performance (Neck and Milliman, 1994). Unfortunately, many employees perceive their job and their organizational commitment negatively due to their lack of purpose or spirituality in their work. The interest in spirituality in the workplace is here to stay, as reflected by the rising number of publications on the topic, and the many reasons for this call on a global level. There is still a broad divergence in interpretations for the word spirituality as well as for the phenomenon “spirituality in the workplace”. The literature demonstrates that applying the spiritual mindset in a workplace will encourage the creativity and innovativeness of employees, which, in turn, enhances their productivity, leading to better overall performance for and by the organization as it relates to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to Markow (2005) this study indicated the need for the role of qualitative methodologies in building a theory of spiritual leadership remains largely unexplored and the qualitative methods potentially could have further insight to the future of spirituality in the workplace as it relates to organizational commitment.

The results in this research are congruent with other studies of spirituality in the workplace (Rego, 2007, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003, Moore and Casper, 2006, Kolodinsky and Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2007) suggesting that when people find meaning in their work activities and feel involved in a spiritual organizational climate, they become happier and healthy employees engaged in a collaborative manner, to apply the full potential to work and bring their entire selves to the organization. They, thus become more productive over the long run compared with employees in organizations where spirituality is ignored or disrespected (Gotsis, 2007). Spirituality exists in corporations, simply because all employees are spiritual beings. However, there are many difficulties to address if a company wishes to acknowledge officially what already exists, and to erect a framework by which the individual’s spirituality will have a positive, work-enhancing expression. The potentially groundbreaking nature of this research leaves no doubt that the intuitively positive relationships between spirituality in the workplace and organizational commitment have a relationship to transform individual and organizational life in ways unrestricted by natural laws. In the years to come, organizations must seek to develop any option possible that can result in a competitive advantage. Developing a spiritual vision will bind an employee to the company and enhance job performance and organizational commitment.

## AUTHOR INFORMATION

**Dr. Eleanor Marschke**, professional sales executive with Thomas & Betts Corporation a Fortune 200 company where she has been employed for twenty three years. Eleanor completed her doctorate degree from Nova Southeastern University the Wayne H. Huzigena Business School in 2008. She is currently an adjunct professor at Strayer University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and Nova Southeastern University in Davie, Florida and is continuing to publish articles on Spirituality in the Workplace. She is a member at Family Christian Center whose ministry is linked to women, children and outreaches to the community. From her commitment to obtaining the highest degree of education she is linked to faith at work, spirituality in the workplace, passion in selling and ethics of lifestyle. Eleanor offers coaching, spiritual direction, and practical applications to career decisions, both for the church and for the business community. Dr. Marschke's website is available at [www.spiriteducator.com](http://www.spiriteducator.com) and this website will provide all the current information on Dr. Marschke.

**Dr. Robert C. Preziosi** was named "Faculty Member of the Year in 2003". He is a professor of management with the Wayne Huizenga Graduate School of Business and Entrepreneurship at Nova Southeastern University. He is faculty chair of HRM and developed the schools' Master's Degree in Leadership. He was the recipient of the school's first Excellence in Teaching Award. In December 2000 he was named Professor of the Decade, and he is on the Editorial Boards of *Employment Relations Today*, *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, *The Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, and *The Journal of Business Case Studies*.

He is listed in *Who's Who in Finance and Industry*, *Who's Who in the World*, and *Who's Who in American Education*. Four times he has been selected for *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. In a recent book, *North American Adult Educators*, he was named 1 of 50 quintessential adult educators of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

He was the Editor of the Pfeiffer Annual on HRM and the Pfeiffer Annual on Management Development. Dr. Preziosi has just completed a book on leadership, *The Leadership Road*.

**Dr. William J. Harrington** is a full professor and a member of the faculty of the Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship at Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Harrington has been associated with Nova Southeastern University for twenty-four years. Dr. Harrington has taught, both, at the masters and doctoral levels in the field of human resource management, organizational behavior, values-based leadership, and productivity improvement processes.

Prior to joining Nova Southeastern University, he built a career in the banking sector, holding management positions with Citibank, Pan American Banks, and Southeast Banks, where he was involved with management accountabilities in organizational design, human resource management, and quality management. He also held professional positions with the Gillette Co. and the Raytheon Co. in Boston. Dr. Harrington's early experience was in teaching emotionally disturbed and autistic children.

Dr. Harrington received his B.A. degree from St. Anselm's College, an M.A. degree from Boston College, an Ed. D degree from Nova Southeastern University, and a Post Graduate - DBA – Human Resource Management Specialization. He also completed the two year Executive Development Program at the Harvard Business School while being sponsored by Citibank.

He is a Eucharistic Minister in the Catholic Church and resides in Plantation, Florida with his wife, Laurie.

## REFERENCES

1. Aburdene, P. (2007). *Megatrends 2010 – The Rise of Conscious Capitalism* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Hampton Road Publishing 144-145.
2. Ashmos, D. P., & Duchon, D. (2000). Spirituality at work: A conceptualization and measure. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(2), 134-145.

3. Baron, R.M. & Kenny, D.A. (1986). The Moderator-Mediator Variable Distinction in Social Psychological Research: Conceptual, Strategic, and Statistical Considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51 (6), 1173 – 1182.
4. Bell, E., & Taylor, S. (2001). “A Rumor of Angels: Researching Spirituality and Work Organizations.” Academy of Management Proceedings, Washington, DC.
5. Benefiel, M. (2003). Mapping the terrain of spirituality in organizations research. *Journal of Organizational Change Magazine*, 16(4), 367-376.
6. Bregman, L., & S. Thierman. (1995). *First person mortal: Personal narratives of illness, dying, and grief*. New York: Paragon.
7. Benner, D.G. (1989). Toward a psychology of spirituality: Implications for personality and psychotherapy. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 5, 19-30.
8. Chandler, C.K., & J.M. Holden. (1992). Counseling for spiritual wellness: Theory and practice. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 71, 168-176.
9. Cook, J. D., Hepworth, S. J., Wall, T. D., Warr, P. B. (1981). *The Experience of Work: A Compendium and Review of 249 Measures and Their Use*. San Diego: Academy Press.
10. Connolly, K. & Myers, J. E. (2003). Wellness and mattering: The role of holistic factors in job satisfaction. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 40(4), 152-160.
11. Dale, E.S. (1991). *Bringing Heaven down to Earth. A Practical Spirituality of Work (American University Studies, Series 7, Theology and Religion, vol. 83)*. New York: Peter Lang.
12. Dehler, G. E. & Welsh, M. A. (1994). Spirituality and organizational transformation: Implications for the new management paradigm. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 9(6), 17-26.
13. DePree, H. (1992). *Business as unusual: The people and principles at Herman Miller*. Zeeland, Michigan: Doubleday Books.
14. Elkins, D.N., Hedstrom, L.J., Hughes, L.L., Leaf, J.A., & Saunders, C. (1988). Toward a humanistic-phenomenological spirituality: Definition, description and measurement. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 28, 5-18.
15. Emmons, R.A. (2000). Is spirituality an intelligence? Motivation, cognition, and the psychology of the ultimate concern. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 10, 30-36.
16. Freshman, B. (1999). An exploratory analysis of definitions and applications of spirituality in the workplace. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 12(4), 318-325.
17. Giacalone, R., & Jurkiewicz, C. (2003). *Handbook of Workplace Spirituality and Organizational Performance*. New York: Spring Books.
18. Gotsis, G & Kortezi, Z (2007). Philosophical Foundations of Workplace Spirituality: A Critical Approach. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 78(1), 577-600.
19. Hair, J.F. Jr., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L. & Black, W.C. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
20. Harrington, W. & Preziosi, R. & Gooden, D. (2004, October 7-9). Worldview resiliency of business degree graduate students – An examination of spiritual experiences and psychological attitudes. *Association of Employment Practices and Principals*, 119.
21. Heaton, D. P., Schmidt-Wilk, J., & Travis, F. (2004). Constructs, methods, and measures for researching spirituality in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 17(1), 62-82.
22. Hill, P, Pargament, K. (2003). Advances in the conceptualization and measurement of religion and spirituality. *American Psychologist Association*, 58(1), 64-74.
23. Koh, W. & Steers, R. & Terborg, J (1995). The effects of transformational leadership on teacher attitudes and student performance in Singapore. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16 (4), 319-333.
24. Krishnakumar, S. & Neck, C. P. (2002). The “what”, “why” and “how” of spirituality in the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 17(3), 153-164.
25. Kroll, F. (2003, September 17). Megachurches, megabusineses, *Forbes Magazine*. Retrieved on October 22, 2005, from <http://www.forbes.com/2003/09/17/c2.1k.097.1megachurch.html>.
26. Mansfield, S. (2004). *The Faith of George W. Bush* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Strang Communications Publishers. 117.
27. Markow, F. & Klenke, K. (2005). The Effects of Personal Meaning and Calling on Organizational Commitment : An Empirical Investigation of Spiritual Leadership. *The International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 13(1), 8-27.

28. Marques, J (2007). The Resiprocity between Spirituality in the Workplace and Thinking Outside the Box. *Business Renaissance Quarterly*, 2(3), 93-117.
29. Marques, J, & Dhiman, S. (2005). Spirituality in the workplace: Developing an integral model and a comprehensive definition. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 7(1), 81-89.
30. McKnight, R. (1984). Spirituality in the workplace. In J.D. Adams, *Transforming work: A collection of organizational transformational readings*, (ed.), Alexandria, VA: Miles River, 138-153.
31. McLaughlin, C. (1998, March 17). Spirituality at work. *The Bridging Tree*, 1, 11.
32. Milliman, J., Czaplewski, A., & Ferguson, J. (2003). Workplace spirituality and employee work attitudes: An exploratory empirical assessment. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 16(4), 426-447.
33. Milliman, J., Ferguson, J., Trickett, D., & Condemi, B. (1999). Spirit and community at Southwest Airlines: An investigation of a spiritual values-based mode. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 12 (3), 221.
34. Mitroff, I., & Denton, E. (1999). *A spiritual audit of corporate America: A hard look at spirituality, religion, and values in the workplace* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
35. Moore, T. W. & Casper, W. J. (2006). An examination of proxy measures of workplace spirituality: A profile model of multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 12(4), 109-118.
36. Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W., Steers, R. M. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14, 224-247.
37. Neck, C. P. & Milliman, J. F. (1994). Thought self-leadership: Finding spiritual fulfillment in organizational life. *Journal of Management Psychology*, 9(6), 9-16.
38. Osteen, J. (2004). *Your best life now –7 steps to living at your full potential*. New York, NY: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
39. Reed, P.G. (1987). Spirituality and well-being in terminally ill hospitalized adults. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 10, 335-344.
40. Reed, P.G. (1991). Self-transcendence and mental health in oldest-old adults. *Nursing Research*, 40, 7-11.
41. Reed, P.G. (1991). Spirituality and mental health of older adults: Extant knowledge for nursing. *Family and Community Health*, 14(2), 14-25.
42. Rego, A & Cunha, M.P. (2007). Workplace spirituality and organizational commitment: An empirical study. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 21(1), 53-75.
43. Tart, C. (1975). "Introduction," In *Transpersonl Psychologies*, ed. C.T. Tart. New York: Harper and Row, 3-7.
44. Warren, R. (2002). *The purpose-driven life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing.
45. Wong, P.T.P. (1998). *Implicit theories of meaningful life and the development of the personal meaning profile (PMP)*. In Wong, P.T.P., and P. Fry, (Eds.), *Handbook of Personal Meaning: Theory, Research, and Practice* (ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

**NOTES**